

Every one of us is feeling the effects of our nation's economic crisis. These are difficult times, and without dramatic action we could face the nation's worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Things are pretty rough right now, worse than anything most of us have ever experienced.

In order to "prevent a crisis from becoming a catastrophe," President Obama asked my colleagues and I in Congress to craft a plan to help our economy recover. We responded by working around the clock over the past few weeks to develop a timely, targeted stimulus to stop our economy from continuing its downward spiral. Yesterday President Obama signed the [economic recovery package](#) into law.

The need for immediate action was clear as 600,000 people lost their jobs last month, and 20,000 more are losing their jobs every day. In fact, the unemployment rate hit 7.6% in January, the highest in more than 16 years.

Many of us are feeling the pinch firsthand. Maybe you or your neighbors lost their homes due to foreclosure. Perhaps your friends or relatives have lost their jobs, or your own job may have been cut as a result of the economic turmoil.

[Tell me how you and your family has been impacted by the economic downturn](#)

As your representative in Congress, I want to make sure that my colleagues understand the particular challenges being experienced within our community. I will tell a selection of your stories on the Floor of the House of Representatives, and I will continue advocating for the needs of our community.

Let me tell you a little about how the recovery package will get our economy back on track.

Benefits of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

- creates 3.5 million American jobs,
- cuts taxes for 95% of American workers,
- moves America towards energy independence,
- restores science and innovation to their past level of prominence in our country,
- modernizes our health care system,
- provides an unprecedented level of accountability and transparency, and
- makes substantial investments in our nation's infrastructure.

What does that mean exactly? And beyond what the bill does for the nation, for California, and our Congressional District?

For the state of California, the bill will create nearly 400,000 jobs, helps our state close its \$40 billion budget shortfall, increases funding for construction of our roads and bridges by \$2.5 billion, reimburses our Medicaid spending by \$10 billion, and provides our schools with \$6.5 billion of much-need funding for construction, class materials, teacher training and funding for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

This last point about education funding is particularly important to me as our state considers cutting its education budget. As an educator, I'm deeply committed to providing our students with a quality education and this recovery package gets us closer to that goal.

What about the city of San Jose and my district, what will it do for residents locally?

There's good news on the local front as well. The Recovery and Reinvestment Act will bring nearly 16,000 jobs to the San Jose area, roughly half of which will be created in in California's 15th district. This is critically important to keeping our district's economy strong. I recognize that some of you may have recently lost your job. I'm committed to advocating on your behalf and this legislation moves us closer to keeping everyone employed.

The bill also makes important investments in public transportation systems that are essential for Silicon Valley and California as a whole. San Jose gets a boost of \$32 million to improve and expand our highways and bridges. Our transit system receives \$66 million to improve local and regional capacity, enabling our transportation systems to reduce traffic congestion and our dependence on foreign oil.

And finally, one of the many things the Recovery and Reinvestment Act is doing is renewing America's investments in basic research and development, in training students for an innovation economy, and in deploying new technologies into the marketplace. This helps Silicon Valley make the advances needed to develop the next generations of technology and remain the world's technology leader.

I hope this was helpful in explaining some of key components of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. There's more to learn, and on my website I have posted additional material explaining how [the economic stimulus invests in health, education, energy, working families, transportation, public housing, accountability and transparency measures, science, and environmental cleanup](#).

It is time for an American recovery and reinvestment plan and I look forward to working with you to make sure this plan works efficiently and effectively.